

Editorial note. For the President's remarks of May 3, 1988, on signing Proclamation 5807, see the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* (vol. 24, p. 564).

Proclamation 5808 of May 3, 1988

National Digestive Disease Awareness Month, 1988

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Digestive diseases rank second among all of the causes of disability due to illness in the United States, and account for one-tenth of the economic burden of illness in our land. Their social and economic impact is enormous; half of all Americans are affected by them at some time during life. More Americans are hospitalized for digestive diseases than for any other family of illness.

In recent years major advances have taken place in digestive disease research, but efforts to determine their causes and to develop ways to prevent and treat them have only begun. Knowing the impact of these diseases and of the critical need for research in this field, private, scientific, and governmental organizations have committed themselves to increasing public awareness and understanding of gastrointestinal diseases.

In recognition of the fourth anniversary of the National Digestive Disease Education Program and of the importance of all efforts to combat digestive diseases, the Congress, by House Joint Resolution 421, has designated the month of May 1988 as "National Digestive Disease Awareness Month" and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this month.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 1988 as National Digestive Disease Awareness Month. I urge the people of the United States and educational, philanthropic, scientific, medical, and health care organizations and professionals to take part in appropriate activities to encourage further research into the causes and cures of all types of digestive disorders.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this third day of May, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twelfth.

RONALD REAGAN